

CHAPTER 57-12

COUNTY BOARD OF EQUALIZATION

57-12-01. Membership of board - Meeting - Required attendance of certain officials.

The board of county commissioners shall meet within the first ten days of June of each year and shall constitute a board of equalization of the assessments made within the county. The chairman of the board shall preside. The county board of equalization shall conduct a continuous day-to-day meeting, not to include Saturdays, Sundays, or legal holidays, until it has completed all duties prescribed by this chapter. The first order of business must be the equalization of assessments of property assessed by city boards of equalization. The second order of business must be the equalization of assessments of property assessed by township boards of equalization. The chairman of each city board of equalization, or the chairman's appointed representative, and each city assessor must be present at such meeting during the first order of business. The chairman of each township board of equalization, or the chairman's appointed representative, and each township assessor must be present at such meeting during the second order of business. Each person required by this section to attend the meeting of the county board of equalization must be compensated at a rate not to exceed ten dollars per day for each day actually and necessarily spent in attendance at such meeting plus the same mileage and expenses as are authorized for subdivision employees and officials. Such per diem and expenses must be paid by the city or township in the same manner as other city or township expenses are paid.

57-12-01.1. Spot checks of real property.

Prior to the annual meeting of the county board of equalization, the board of county commissioners of each county within this state shall provide for spot checks upon property within each county to properly verify the accuracy of the real property listings and valuations. The spot checks must be reviewed by the county boards of equalization at their annual meeting in June and such boards shall make the necessary corrections in the property assessment listings and valuations. Such changes in the assessments must be made in accordance with the provisions of this chapter.

In case any person whose duty it is to list property with the assessor refuses to list such property or intentionally omits a portion of such property in the person's listing as indicated by the spot check, the county boards of equalization, as a penalty for such refusal or omission, may make an added assessment on such property of twenty-five percent in excess of its true valuation.

The board of county commissioners may select such persons or agencies as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this section and provide for their compensation.

57-12-02. Duties of board as to assessments in unorganized territory.

The members of the board of county commissioners also shall meet as a board of equalization as respects all assessments made in assessment districts not embraced in a city or organized township, and shall perform the duties prescribed for a township board of equalization as respects unorganized territory, and such board must be regarded as the local board of equalization for such territory.

57-12-03. Duties of county auditor.

The county auditor shall act as clerk of the county board of equalization and shall keep an accurate journal or record of the proceedings and orders of said board, showing the facts and evidence upon which its action is based. Such record must be published as other proceedings of the board of county commissioners are published, and a copy of such published proceedings must be transmitted to the state tax commissioner with the abstract of assessment required by law.

57-12-04. Duties of board.

At its meeting, the county board of equalization shall examine and compare the assessments returned by the assessors of all the districts within the county and shall proceed to equalize the same throughout the county between the several assessment districts.

57-12-05. Requirements to be followed in equalization of individual assessments.

The county board of equalization, when equalizing individual assessments, shall observe the following rules:

1. The valuation of each tract or lot of real property which is returned below its true and full value must be raised to the sum believed by such board to be the true and full value thereof.
2. The valuation of each tract or lot of real property which, in the opinion of the board, is returned above its true and full value must be reduced to such sum as is believed to be the true and full value thereof.

57-12-06. (Effective through December 31, 2015) Requirements to be followed in equalizing between assessment districts and in equalizing between property owners.

1. The rules prescribed in section 57-12-05 apply when the board of county commissioners is equalizing assessments between the several assessment and taxing districts in the county provided that in such case, except as otherwise provided in subsection 2, the board may raise or lower the valuation of classes of property only so as to equalize the assessments as between districts.
2. Notwithstanding any other provision of this section:
 - a. The county board of equalization after notice to the local board of equalization may reduce the assessment on any separate piece or parcel of real estate even though such property was assessed in a city or township having a local board of equalization; provided, that the county board of equalization does not have authority to reduce any such assessment unless the owner of the property or the person to whom it was assessed first appeals to the county board of equalization, either by appearing personally or by a representative before the board or by mail or other communication to the board, in which the owner's reasons for asking for the reduction are made known to the board. The proceedings of the board shall show the manner in which the appeal was made known to the board and the reasons for granting any reduction in any such assessment.
 - b. The county board of equalization after notice to the local board of equalization may increase the assessment on any separate piece or parcel of real property even though such property was assessed in a city or township having a local board of equalization; provided, that the county board of equalization does not have authority to increase any such assessment unless it first gives notice by mail to the owner of the property that such person may appear before the board on the date designated in the notice, which date must be at least five days after the mailing of the notice. The county auditor as clerk of the board shall send such notice to the person or persons concerned.
 - c. If the county board of equalization during the course of its equalization sessions determines that any property of any person has been listed and assessed in the wrong classification, it shall direct the county auditor to correct the listing so as to include such assessment in the correct classification.
3. The owner of any separate piece or parcel of real estate that has been assessed may appeal the assessment thereon to the state board of equalization as provided in section 57-13-04; provided, however, that such owner has first appealed the assessment to the local equalization board of the taxing district in which the property was assessed and to the county board of equalization of the county in which the property was assessed. Notwithstanding this requirement, an owner of property which has been subjected to a new assessment authorized under section 57-14-08 may appeal the new assessment to the state board of equalization in the manner provided for in section 57-14-08.

(Effective for taxable years beginning after December 31, 2015) County board of equalization - Equalizing between assessment districts and between properties - Limitation on increase - Notice.

1. The rules prescribed in section 57-12-05 apply when the board of county commissioners is equalizing assessments between the several assessment and taxing districts in the county provided that in such case, except as otherwise provided in subsection 2, the board may raise or lower the valuation of classes of property only so as to equalize the assessments as between districts. If the board orders an increase under this subsection, the board must comply with any requirement for notice of an assessment increase under section 57-02-53.
2. Notwithstanding any other provision of this section:
 - a. The county board of equalization after notice to the local board of equalization may reduce the assessment on any separate piece or parcel of real estate even though such property was assessed in a city or township having a local board of equalization. The county board of equalization may not reduce any such assessment unless the owner of the property or the person to whom it was assessed first appeals to the county board of equalization, either by appearing personally or by a representative before the board or by mail or other communication to the board, in which the owner's reasons for asking for the reduction are made known to the board. The proceedings of the board shall show the manner in which the appeal was made known to the board and the reasons for granting any reduction in any such assessment.
 - b. The county board of equalization after notice to the local board of equalization may increase the assessment on any separate piece or parcel of real property even though such property was assessed in a city or township having a local board of equalization. The county board of equalization may not increase the valuation returned by the assessor or the local board of equalization to an amount that results in a cumulative increase of more than fifteen percent from the amount of the previous year's assessment without giving the owner or the owner's agent notice by mail to the owner of the property that such person may appear before the board on the date designated in the notice, which date must be at least five days after the mailing of the notice. The county auditor as clerk of the board shall send such notice to the person or persons concerned. If the board orders an increase under this subdivision, the board must comply with any requirement for notice of an assessment increase under section 57-02-53.
 - c. If the county board of equalization during the course of its equalization sessions determines that any property of any person has been listed and assessed in the wrong classification, it shall direct the county auditor to correct the listing so as to include such assessment in the correct classification.
3. The owner of any separate piece or parcel of real estate that has been assessed may appeal the assessment thereon to the state board of equalization as provided in section 57-13-04; provided, however, that such owner has first appealed the assessment to the local equalization board of the taxing district in which the property was assessed and to the county board of equalization of the county in which the property was assessed. Notwithstanding this requirement, an owner of property which has been subjected to a new assessment authorized under section 57-14-08 may appeal the new assessment to the state board of equalization in the manner provided for in section 57-14-08.

57-12-07. Township and municipal officers to advise with board.

Repealed by S.L. 1963, ch. 381, § 2.

57-12-08. Auditor to correct list and send abstract to state tax commissioner.

The county auditor shall calculate the changes in the assessment lists determined by the county board of equalization and shall make corrections accordingly. After making such corrections, the county auditor shall make duplicate abstracts of the real property lists, one copy

of which must be filed in the office of the county auditor and one copy of which must be forwarded to the state tax commissioner on or before the last day of June following each county equalization.

57-12-09. (Repealed effective January 1, 2016) Notice of increased assessment to real estate owner.

1. When any assessor has increased the true and full valuation of any lot or tract of land including any improvements thereon by three thousand dollars or more and to ten percent or more than the amount of the last assessment, written notice of the amount of increase and the amount of the last assessment must be delivered in writing by the assessor to the property owner, mailed in writing to the property owner at the property owner's last-known address, or provided to the property owner by electronic mail directed with verification of receipt to an electronic mail address at which the property owner has consented to receive notice. Delivery of notice to a property owner under this section must be completed not fewer than fifteen days before the meeting of the local equalization board. The tax commissioner shall prescribe suitable forms for this notice and the notice must show the true and full value as defined by law of the property, including improvements, that the assessor used in making the assessment for the current year and for the year in which the last assessment was made and must also show the date prescribed by law for the meeting of the local equalization board of the assessment district in which the property is located and the meeting date of the county equalization board. The notice must be mailed or delivered at the expense of the assessment district for which the assessor is employed.
2. The form of notice prescribed by the tax commissioner must require a statement to inform the taxpayer that an assessment increase does not mean property taxes on the parcel will increase. The notice must state that each taxing district must base its tax rate on the number of dollars raised from property taxes in the previous taxable year by the taxing district and that notice of public hearing will be mailed to the property owner if a greater property tax levy is being proposed by the taxing district. The notice may not contain an estimate of a tax increase resulting from the assessment increase.
3. The assessor shall provide an electronic or printed list including the name and address of the addressee of each assessment increase notice required under this section to each city, county, school district, or city park district in which the subject property is located, but a copy does not have to be provided to any such taxing district that levied a property tax levy of less than one hundred thousand dollars for the prior year.